



Michigan National Organization for Women

Post Office Box 860
East Lansing, Michigan 48826
(517) 485-9687
www.michnow.org

**Testimony Concerning House Bill 4327
before the
Michigan House Labor Committee
March 11, 2009
by
Mary Pollock, Legislative Vice-President**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bill 4327 which would prohibit employment discrimination against pregnant employees.

First, I want to thank Representative Young for recognizing the important issue of unfair treatment of pregnant workers and introducing the bill in last session. Although there is federal and state law prohibiting pregnancy discrimination, pregnant workers are sometimes still treated differently than other temporarily disabled employees, especially in male-dominated work settings. This bill highlights and brings to the public's attention once again that all the benefits of employment have to be fairly offered to employees regardless of pregnancy.

We interpret the phrase "for any employment related purpose" in the bill to include:

- all employer policies and practices related to use of paid or unpaid sick leave, annual leave, personal leave, and medical leave;
- all employer policies and practices related to compensation, health insurance, and long-term disability insurance;
- all employer policies and practices related to accommodating a temporary disability such as modifying tasks or performing alternative assignments;
- the right to return to the previous job if employees on sick or disability leave have a right to return the previous job;
- the right to have pregnancy-related health insurance if health insurance coverage is provided to other employees;
- the right to be treated without discrimination based on the marital status of the pregnant employee;
- the right to be free from retaliation from the employer or co-workers for becoming pregnant. The employer has an affirmative obligation to prevent retaliation and harassment of pregnant employees and take effective action to discipline those who engage in such practices.
- the right to oppose without retaliation or harassment an employment practice that seems discriminatory.

Michigan NOW thanks you for the opportunity to comment on SB776.